

# CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA, INC.

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## BULLETIN

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### A Foster Day Care Service

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#### Organization

ON April 1, 1943, Chicago Orphan Asylum embarked upon the foster family day care project for white protestant working mothers. The program was limited to this group because Chicago's child care program has been organized on a sectarian basis and the other sectarian groups preferred to serve their own people. Also Chicago Orphan Asylum did not feel able to serve too large a group on an experimental basis. A year later the service at Chicago Orphan Asylum was extended to the negro community.

When day care service was first offered, one worker assumed responsibility for organizing and administering the project under the direction of Chicago Orphan Asylum's casework consultant and the executive secretary. Six months later a case aid was employed to make foster home investigations after the worker had interviewed the prospective foster mothers. When the negro group was included, the staff was increased by a negro worker to develop that service. A third worker was employed in May, 1944. Recently the case aid resigned and we are planning to replace her with a trained worker to do homefinding so that the other workers may spend their full time counseling with mothers and supervising the day care homes.

Protestant and non-sectarian mothers from the entire city of Chicago are served by the project and the duties of the workers consist of counseling with working mothers, interviewing prospective day care mothers, studying the foster homes, and supervising those in use.

An advisory committee has been organized and is composed of members of the Chicago Orphan Asylum board and lay and professional people from the community who are in touch with and interested in day care.

#### Types of Situations Served

When the foster family day care project was organized, it was intended to be a counseling and placement service for mothers who either do not need or else do not recognize their needs for any service other than the location of good supervised day care homes for their babies. This does not assume the absence of problems but only takes for granted that the mother is capable of handling them and is able to work and at the same time to carry the responsibilities of using day care for her baby. For this reason, the supervision has been largely through the

foster day care homes, and supplementary brief contacts with the mother, either by telephone or in the foster home when she has been calling for the child. We have thought that this approach would best serve the child as the foster mother had the care of the baby during the greater part of its active day. Nevertheless, the mother is encouraged to see the worker whenever there is a problem in which she feels that the agency can be helpful, either in the adjustment of the child or in the relationship between the foster mother and herself.

Another type of situation which the agency has served with day care homes is emergency temporary day care. In Chicago at present there are very

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limited facilities for temporary full-time care and because of this, when there are children who need emergency care for one reason or another and day care can be used, we are glad to meet the need, although it is not the primary function of the service.

### Case Work Service at Intake

Any mother who seeks day care is encouraged to come to the office for counseling as we believe this is an important part of the service and make no placements or referrals to homes until we have discussed the mother's problem with her in person. In the counseling of the mother the service is one of frankly giving advice about use of the day care plan for the baby's care. The interview itself is stereotyped in that we attempt to secure such information as the present situation, the resources—financial and for the baby's care, the baby's developmental history, and the mother's own plan for day care and what it involves. It varies, however, according to the individual mother and her needs. The mother's reality situation is discussed with her on a common sense level. She is encouraged to tell why she must work and how long she feels it will be necessary for her to work. The importance of a continuing placement for the baby is talked over with her as well as the importance of a good relationship with the day care mother. We discuss her feelings about placing the baby and some of the hardships of day care on the baby and the difficulties of working and caring for a home and baby. If after talking with the mother we feel she cannot use the service, we do not offer it to her and if she seems ready to accept a referral to a casework agency, we discuss available agencies with her permitting her to make her own arrangement for an appointment unless she asks for a direct referral.

If the mother feels after discussing her situation that she must work, the worker then explains the process of placement to her. The need for a medical statement from the doctor, as well as her responsibilities to the day care mother and the agency, are discussed and she is given a letter which reminds her that before the child can be placed she and the day care mother must fill out and sign the day care agreement, one of which is to be returned with the medical statement to the day care office. She is then referred to a suitable home which is geographically convenient for her and the foster mother is usually called while the mother is in the office.

### Placement

After this referral, the mother makes her own arrangements with the foster mother, unless we feel it

is wise that the worker be present. This is usually done where there is indication that the mother is unstable and is not sure of the role of the agency in the placement.

We believe that the foster day care plan is not the ideal arrangement for the care of babies of working mothers. Housekeeping service in most instances would be more beneficial to both the mother and the baby, but this plan on a large scale is impractical in these times when employment is at its peak. We have found from our experience that if the mother and foster day care mother are helped to prepare the baby and themselves for the change in his life, his adjustment in the new situation is less difficult. Day care placement is never easy for him but with a kind, sympathetic foster day care mother who understands that the baby is having a difficult time and needs extra attention and affection until he becomes acquainted and comfortable, it appears now that the baby suffers less than if he is completely separated from his mother.

After children are placed in day care homes, the home is supervised by one of the workers and supervision consists of at least one visit a month during the period of placement. At that time the foster mothers are encouraged to discuss their problems in the handling of the children and any difficulties they have in their relationships with the mothers. The worker also observes the children in their play and makes suggestions to the foster mother about the handling of the children where need for this is indicated.

### Day Care Fees

At the time the project was organized, it was rather difficult to set up standard fees, as there had been no foster family day care offered in the city before and we had very little basis on which to make a fee scale. We believed that since the mothers would probably be making adequate salaries and most of them would have some supplementation, either through Government allotments or through support contributed by the fathers, that the fees should be somewhat higher than those charged for full-time care through an agency, and that they should be a fixed rather than a sliding scale. There was also the practical necessity of securing homes geographically convenient throughout the city and we felt that while we did not want day care mothers whose primary interest was an income, we still had to make day care financially attractive. Therefore, the fee scale set up at the beginning was one dollar a day for service only, and if the day care mother provided the food,



the fees were set at eight to ten dollars a week. We based this fee, which includes food, on a study which was made through other foster homes in the agency where the mothers were able to give us estimates on how much the food would cost. The sliding scale of eight to ten dollars was made because of the variable hours and the number of meals served. In discussing the rates with the mother, it is explained that they are expected to pay eight dollars for one meal; nine for two; and ten dollars for three meals.

When the negro project was started, we found that these fees might be prohibitive, for these mothers as a rule earn less. Also many of them have not been educated to the value of paying such fees for the care of their children. Yet it was even more necessary to make day care financially attractive to the foster mothers as there is a dearth of foster homes in the negro community. The rates, therefore, remain at one dollar a day for service only, but when food is included, the rates are fixed at seven to nine dollars.

This system of fees has worked out quite successfully and there have been few mothers who used day care who have been unable to afford it. However, because we believe that many mothers who need to work have not completed their applications because of the rates some consideration has been given to supplementation to the foster mothers in certain areas, thereby permitting the mother to pay a lower fee. Nevertheless we decided against such a plan as it would mean a much more thorough review of each case where supplementation is indicated and we are not sure that the service should be used by these mothers, but feel rather that they should be encouraged to remain at home and secure other supplementation which would be less expensive to the community and a more constructive plan for the child.

#### Service Costs

The cost of the day care service to the community over this period has been \$9,752.43. This has included salaries for one worker for eighteen months, a case aid for a year, one worker for six months, another worker for five months; for a part-time stenographer for eighteen months, and a full-time stenographer for six months. It has also included office rent, telephone, social service exchange, and transportation. The cost of other incidentals and office furniture and supplies has been absorbed by Chicago Orphan Asylum.

#### Recruiting Foster Day Care Homes

Recruiting foster homes has been as difficult in the field of day care as it is in full-time care. We have

been fortunate in that we can use homes which are rejected by agencies interested in full-time care because they lack sleeping space. We have used various methods; some of them have been usual ones, such as newspaper and radio publicity, and we have had a number of homes referred to us by other agencies or within our own agency. We have also used our own foster mothers as recruiters and have found this method quite successful in that a greater number of the homes which are referred by them are useable than those which apply from publicity. Community groups have also been a good source for day care homes. Appeals for the need for homes have been made to women's clubs and church groups with some success. This has been particularly true in our negro project where the worker has had to educate that group regarding the importance of using supervised homes for day care. One of the chief resources of foster homes has been among the applicants for service. Many times, there are mothers who do not really want to work but feel that this is the only solution to their financial problem. If, in talking with them at the intake interview, it develops that they are interested in staying home and they appear to have qualities of warmth and sympathy toward their own child and toward other children, and if they have space and facilities to offer day care, it is suggested that they consider the possibility of offering their services. We have felt that the success we have had in this method of recruitment has been unusual and most of the mothers which we have selected from this group have worked out remarkably well. It is felt that part of this is due to the fact that they are sympathetic toward other working mothers and can be a little more tolerant and patient with the mother who finds it difficult to call for her baby on time or is not as responsible as is to be desired.

#### Foster Home Studies

Foster home studies are usually initiated by an interview in the office where the problems of day care are discussed with the applicant and at that time an attempt is made to get a general picture of her household, her attitude toward children and of caring for them. We need to know something about the foster mother's past experiences, particularly those which would give us a better understanding of how she feels toward adults and children and how she is likely to get along with them. Generally this comes out more easily and more naturally during the visit to her home where she may be more at ease. The remainder of the foster home study consists of at least one visit in the home, the visiting of the

physician and minister if the family is active in church, and schools if there are children of school age. The information which is sought is intended to throw light upon the relationships within the family and upon the mother's ability to care for children and her attitude toward them. Before the first home visit is made, she is expected to return her application and before we complete the study, it is necessary for the mother to have had a physical examination and a written statement from her doctor that she is in good health. Other members of the family are also expected to be examined if they are in the home when the children are there.

It should be explained here that we have not made such an exhaustive study of day care homes as is made in our homefinding department for full-time boarding homes because the mothers not only give final approval but also supervise the homes in the sense that they are in daily touch with the foster day care mother and have the opportunity to observe the care the baby is being given. We are of the opinion that more exhaustive home studies should be made especially when the home is being used for more than one child. Not only will such studies afford more protection to the child and security to the mother, but it will better prepare the day care mother to help the parent in her problem of placement and will draw the foster mother closer to the agency.

Geographical location of day care homes convenient to the mother's home is an important factor in foster homefinding. For this reason, it is sometimes impossible to serve a mother who asks for day care because there is no home available in her neighborhood. On the other hand, it is often impossible to use a good day care home because there are no applications in that neighborhood. The latter problem can be somewhat mitigated by the foster mother's advertising in a neighborhood paper and referring the mothers who answer the ad to the agency for counseling and placement.

#### Foster Mother-Agency Relationships

Within recent months, an attempt has been made to bring the foster mother into closer relationship with the agency. There have been two foster mothers' meetings at which time there was a discussion in child care and also the role of the agency was discussed with them. These meetings received enthusiastic response and seemed to be quite stimulating to the foster mothers. As a result of this, a study course has been planned for three nights at which time the consulting psychiatrist for Chicago Orphan Asylum and one of the workers who has had a great deal of

experience in baby care will discuss Dr. C. Anderson Aldrich's book, "Babies are Human Beings." It is hoped that this course will not only be an educational process but that it will also lead to closer cooperation between the agency and the foster mothers.

#### Problems in Day Care

We have found that there are several problems which are peculiar to day care. One of the chief problems is the rapid turnover of the babies. In spite of the fact that a great deal of time is spent in counseling the mothers and we attempt to help them face the problems of additional responsibilities incurred when one is employed, many mothers remove their babies after a short period of placement. Figures show that the 820 mothers counseled over a period of eighteen months, placed 299 children. Of this number 53 are still placed and 35 were placed for "temporary care." The average length of stay for the 211 other children was 2.65 months. This figure is somewhat lower than the average length of stay in the war nurseries in Chicago, but compares favorably with their figures. Four children have been placed for more than a year and 19 have been receiving day care for five months or more.

We are not sure why there is such a rapid turnover and feel this is one of the problems which demands more careful study. Some of the reasons are obvious. Many mothers plan to work only a short time but do not reveal this plan at the time of the interview. Others find it impossible to withstand the stress and strain of working and placing their babies. We are also beginning to think that perhaps we have overestimated the mother's ability to manage such a plan as day care without more supervision.

In day care the problem of the relationship between the foster mother and parent is increased even over that traditionally found in full-time care. It is necessary for the mother and foster mother to have a good relationship as they see each other daily and have a common concern for the child. We have felt that our success in maintaining good relationships between the mother and foster mother has been due to the fact that in our intake interview, the importance of a good relationship is stressed to the mother. Also the visits in the home when the mother is present have been helpful in creating a better spirit of cooperation with the foster mother, the mother, and the agency.

We are faced with the fact that while we have many applying for the day care service who can carry the physical and emotional burden without

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## The Adoptive Foster Parent\*

*A Basis for Evaluation*

CONSTANCE RATHBUN

Supervisor Homefinding Department, Children's Aid Association, Boston

IN an adoptive home study, the trained worker must recognize not only the agency limitations and her own subjective error but the unconscious drives and conflicts motivating the decision of applicants who wish to adopt, as well as their consciously expressed needs and preferences. The surprisingly small amount of literature on adoptions has so far concerned itself only slightly with the mixed feelings associated with the all important desire for a child. Only as we are aware of this ambivalence, of wanting and not wanting, and of the anxieties often indirectly expressed but stemming from such divided feelings, can we judge with some accuracy and skill who will be suitable parents for a given child. Our responsibility is to recognize when common fears or uncertainties, normal in a given context, become translated into something more neurotic that might play havoc with the child's future security.

### Emotional Needs of Worker Affecting Evaluation

Before discussing some of the problems involved in the evaluation of adoptive parents, I should like to mention briefly the needs of the worker which are met in this particular profession. The choice of vocation in the child welfare field is often determined by an overidentification with the child. Especially in the field of adoption one finds such motivation. Unsolved emotional conflicts of childhood may lead the worker into this branch of child welfare where accepted power and authority are satisfying to her, or where legitimate concern with the child can play into her repressed maternal needs. Unsatisfactory relations with her own parents may send her on a will o' the wisp hunt for perfect adoptive parents. Because her conception of ideal parent figures have no counterpart in reality, and because she has so much anxiety about this subject, it may be very difficult for her to arrive at any final decision about the qualifications for parenthood of the applicants whom she is interviewing. If she wants very much to have a child of her own but is unable to, she is in a most difficult position to judge rationally when it is wise to refuse the requests of applicants experiencing a similar frustration. Thus before initiating any home study she must know with some clarity what subjective factors will inevitably weight her own conclusions.

\*Delivered at National Conference, Cleveland, May 1944.

### Anxieties of Applicant

It probably requires a fair amount of "screwing up of courage" for many people to come to a social agency for help with this tremendously important and very personal problem. Most initial interviews, regardless of the content, are characterized by tension, self-consciousness, and uncertainty as to what the agency wants in the way of information and what its criteria are for good parents. In this first contact with the worker some expression of anxiety by the applicant is inevitable and normal. Where, for example, there has been the recent loss of an only child or perhaps repeated miscarriages, it is not uncommon for self control to crack, as this subject, fraught with so much feeling is touched upon. Even those who have not had to adjust to such experiences may be apprehensive when facing a professionally trained worker. They may have odd ideas of this species gathered from reading *Lily Crackle* or from third hand tales of someone who went to a welfare agency for financial help. A note of resentment creeps into their tone as they say theirs "is just another application filed away alphabetically with myriads of others." They may, at the end of an interview, say rather naively that this hasn't been as bad as they expected, which makes one wonder how grim was the anticipation. Another common anxiety is caused by the inevitable element of competition between applicants. They realize that there are not nearly enough children to go around, that in a sense they are bidding against other applicants, and so they want to create as favorable an impression as possible on the worker. Some can express directly their insecurity about this by asking what things we feel to be most important in judging families, and how we decide between the many on our lists. Most, however, assume we want to know the more obvious points of age, religion, income, etc., are willing to talk fairly freely about these, but remain perplexed as to what subtler factors we may consider even more significant in evaluating them as prospective parents. The attitude of judging by the worker and the feeling of being judged by the applicant cannot be disguised by the label "adoptive home study" and, alas, we have no Dun and Bradstreet rating emotional stability, to which we can refer with ease and accuracy.

### Attitude Regarding Childlessness

After sorting out adoption applications according to the more obvious categories of age, religion and economic status, concerning which each agency has its own policies, the worker faces early in the interviewing process the question of why a child is wanted. Most of the people seen are for one reason or another unable to have a child of their own. Sterility and the attitude of the client toward it must be considered. Dr. Florence Clothier writes that "failure in this all important biological function is in itself a source of the deepest anxiety and insecurity."<sup>1</sup> Some do express directly their feelings of helplessness and anger at a vindictive fate. One applicant labeled bitterly her inability to conceive as "a slap in the face." Many resent the apparent injustice in the denial of children to those who want them most and the ease of reproduction by those who do not seem to care. They resent the shortage of children available for adoption. They would frankly welcome, they sometimes say, a rise in the illegitimacy rate, unaware of the social and psychological implications of such a statement. Not long ago a husband who was obviously a conservative solid citizen, discouraged by long waiting lists, said that it would be almost worthwhile to pay some girl to get herself illegitimately pregnant, a point of view surely inconsistent with the rest of his moral code. His concern was much less with pure logic than with finding a way to meet his own deep emotional need.

### Attitude Toward Medical Study

Social workers should be better informed on current concepts concerning the causes of sterility. Research in this field has advanced markedly in the past fifteen years. In the past the family physician commonly told his patient that an infantile uterus was the reason she could never become pregnant. Now it is recognized that sterility is a relative term and may have multiple causation. In a hundred sterility cases studied, the average number of factors per case was 4.81, with about one-third on the male side and the remaining two-thirds on that of the female.<sup>2</sup> Most cases, however, showed a division of responsibility between the two sexes. At the present time there seems to be less resistance on the part of the man to submit to a complete sterility study, and less inclination to allocate to his wife all blame for

lack of children. Conversely though, there is the wife who has been told there is no reason why she can not become pregnant so far as her own health is concerned, but who is overprotective of her husband's inertia here. She seems content to rest her case with the adoption agency on some such statement that the mumps her husband had in childhood made him sterile, though she has no clinical verification of this opinion. The attitude of such couples toward further medical study is worth exploration by the social worker and may be indicative of their deeper feelings about having a child. Reluctance to accept such a suggestion always raises the question why. Assuming for purposes of argument that a way can be devised for most couples to find this sort of medical attention, in spite of difficulties in obtaining medical services, what about those who could but who will not make any further effort in this direction? My feeling is that in such instances this unwillingness may be the expression of a deeply ambivalent attitude toward having a child, and that it is in effect almost an unconscious wish to have the agency recognize the part of them that does not want a child and so perhaps refuse their application.

### Functional Sterility

Relevant to this is the controversial question of functional sterility. As defined by Dr. Robert Knight it includes those cases in which "the generative organs seem to be normal, but conception does not occur, even though no contraceptive measures are used."<sup>3</sup> When a person who has been unable to conceive adopts a child and then becomes pregnant, Dr. Knight assumes that an unconscious opposition to childbearing might have been responsible for this earlier functional sterility. The mechanism of this is still a matter of hypothesis and as such outside the scope of the adoption worker. However, since most people prefer to have their own children if at all possible, it is our concern that everything reasonable to accomplish this end should be tried before adoption. In some instances it may be possible through case work to help resistant individuals accept a more accurate diagnosis and possible treatment, and so pave the way to having their own child. When strong negative feelings about children are revealed, the agency should, as Dr. Knight points out, exclude such individuals as acceptable foster parents. The inequalities of supply and demand tend to weight the adoption applications in favor of those whose

<sup>1</sup> Clothier, Florence. *Adoption Procedure and the Community*. Mental Hygiene xxv: 2, p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> Meaker, Samuel. *Human Sterility*. Williams & Wilkins. Baltimore, 1934. p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> Knight, Robert. *Some Problems Involved in Selecting and Rearing Adopted Children*. Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic. Vol. 5. No. 3.



sterility is definitely established, and who would otherwise be denied the experience of parenthood. The hazards of adjustment in that family constellation of own and adopted child should make most workers rather wary of placing a child with a couple who may later be able to have their own. Not that the applicant is going to see eye to eye with the worker on this point, for invariably in such cases she will assure her that both children would be treated equally. It is the perspective supplied by follow-up studies in adoption and by an analysis of child guidance clinic cases with such a family set-up that shows how well-adjusted and emotionally mature parents must be to give adequate security and affection without detrimental discrimination to two children who entered the family by such diverse routes.

### Emotional Relationship of Applicants

Many who apply to an agency to solve the problems created by their sterility do so only after several years of marriage. When hope of pregnancy is gone there follows a relatively long period of gradual adjustment to the idea of accepting someone else's child as their own. The sensitive worker should listen for clues to determine what sort of masculine-feminine roles have crystallized between husband and wife since they have lived together. The question is more than that of a mutually satisfactory sex relationship. If either has married a partner who is primarily like a parent, with whom he has continued comfortably in the role of a child, the subsequent displacement by an adopted child will introduce a note of competition. The rivalry that then takes place can precipitate such tension that the emotional health of the whole family suffers and the prognosis for successful adoption is poor. Dr. Frederick Allen in his book entitled, "Psychotherapy with Children," discusses this in relation to the advent of an own child which he says brings inevitably

"a realignment of sentiments of the two adult members of the group. Their roles as husband and wife assume different direction and significance in the new status of father and mother."

The somewhat older age of most adoptive parents may make them even less flexible to meet this change in status. Therefore the adoption worker must be able to decide whether a pattern has been too well entrenched for them to give up former satisfactions for the newer ones of parenthood.

### Specifications About Child's Background

A subject which commonly arouses some anxiety in prospective parents is the background of the adoptive child. Some request that all decisions in

this area be entirely the business of the agency. Others request explicit qualifications of ancestry, appearance and intellectual capacity. Most are willing to accept some of the unknowns and risks inherent in the adoption process. When unusual attitudes are encountered, the case worker must not reject the client immediately because of over-rigidity or indifference, but discover if she can the source of these feelings in his previous experiences. The person who prefers to know nothing at all of the adoptive child's true parents may be overfearful of the day when her child will question her on this subject, and use that lack of knowledge as a protection against unpleasantness. Perhaps this attitude comes from a deeper inability to accept emotionally the fact that the adopted child actually does have a biological and often cultural heritage separate from the adoptive parents, and may turn out to be a radically different member of their family group. From the point of view of the child, the earlier his placement with suitable adoptive parents, the deeper his identification with his new family and the less his need to turn in phantasy or actuality to his own parents. But the adoptive parents must be able to meet any later requests from the child for information with honesty, tempered by a sense of timing as to what is appropriate to discuss at a given stage of psychological development. Such a problem of course arises long after the probationary period, except when older children are placed, so that if any professional help is given, it will probably be through the child guidance clinic rather than the original placing agency.

When the request for a child is framed by a meticulous and detailed list of specifications, we should know that the applicant has anxieties from which he is protecting himself, knowingly or unknowingly. The case worker must not let herself be maneuvered into an academic discussion of heredity vs. environment at this point, since even the most fluent comprehensive citation of authoritative sources is not what the client is really asking for. The strictly intellectual approach to an emotional conflict of this sort just does not work. The better method is to look for the source of such anxieties. It might be in the applicant's observation of an ill advised unfortunate adoption in her own family circle. If so, does this in turn simply give weight to whatever unconscious conflicts she may have, and so provide a convenient rationalization of such feelings. The negative side of her wishes can then come out in a perfectly acceptable manner by saying that she does not wish to consider any child whose heredity includes alcohol-

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## BULLETIN

Published monthly (omitted in July and August) as the official organ of the Child Welfare League of America.

Henrietta L. Gordon, *Editor*

The Bulletin is in large measure a Forum for discussion in print of child welfare problems. Endorsement does not necessarily go with the printing of opinions expressed over a signature.

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## Healthy and Growing

THE equivalent of an annual physical examination has been given the Child Welfare League of America. The Directors in the regular Fall board meeting, held October 27 and 28 in New York City, felt the organization's pulse and took its blood pressure. They found the League healthy and growing. They wished it were larger so as to cope with more of the tasks awaiting it but they recorded satisfaction with the quality of the work being done in 1944.

Illustrations of their field work were submitted in turn by all members of the League's staff. A graphic background for these interpretations was a map of the United States on which were marked all of the League's member agencies in terms of the services each has received from our staff during the last five years. The map and its implications were clearly described by Ernest H. Cole, whose travels and work give him the most inclusive picture possessed by any in the League's employ. After a brief description of his own field service, he introduced others of the regular staff. Miss Alice T. Dashiell told of her work with day nurseries and community groups interested in day care, these latter services often having been requested by members of the League and usually resulting in valuable indirect service to those members. Mrs. Henrietta L. Gordon told of her field work which is in addition to her major responsibility for publications and information service. She has given a strong impetus to staff training in three agencies. Miss Margaret Reeves gave vivid accounts of field visits to member agencies which badly needed the League's assistance. Her work with private agencies and those under public welfare administration gives

her a rich understanding of all types of foster care and other services to dependent and neglected children.

The League's war service projects were reviewed. Miss Abigail F. Brownell gave a progress report on the study of services for dependent and neglected Negro children in Cleveland, New York City and Philadelphia, a study which is providing findings which will help all who would plan more complete and better facilities for this group so seldom enjoying all of the privileges which America thinks it provides for its children. Miss Mary Keeley told of the League's survey of child welfare resources in San Diego, her study of care for infants in Seattle and of night care for children in the Vancouver-Portland area. In addition to the services of Miss Brownell and Miss Keeley, supported from A.W.C.S. funds, the war service study of care for infants was extended by Miss Dashiell in Indianapolis and Philadelphia.

Introductory to all this were the reports of the president and the executive director, each of whom has carried various responsibilities in the name of the League during the year.

Service visits of one day or more have been made during the past year to 87 member agencies, compared to a total of 156 of such visits during the past three years. Thirty-four members, however, have done without such visits during the last five years, although most of them have been touched by brief visits of less than a day, of which 84 were made during the past year and 284 in the past three years. It is hoped that a larger volume of such service will be forthcoming in 1945, and we are proud that the League has kept so consistently at this part of its work in spite of the extra demands of wartime.

Members and affiliates have encouraged us in all this by a substantial increase in the total paid in dues. Our contributors also have given a larger total than in any preceding year, details of which will be reported after the end of the calendar year. Increased wartime expenses have absorbed these added amounts and require an even greater production from both sources of income, even as a growing child requires an increasing number of calories.

It is with some pride that we can give our constituent agencies this reassurance in the midst of the war—the Child Welfare League is healthy and growing and ready to do its work even better during the remaining months of 1944 and 1945.

HOWARD W. HOPKIRK



## A Wartime Adoption Problem

*The Adoption of Children Born out of Wedlock to Married Women Whose Husbands are Overseas.*

MAUD MORLOCK

Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor

SOCIAL agencies in many parts of the country are being asked to place in adoption children born out of wedlock to women whose husbands are overseas. Having received several requests for information on this subject, the Children's Bureau wrote to a number of State departments of welfare and private child-placing agencies asking what their experience had been in the matter. No attempt was made to cover the total number of States and the following is merely a summary of the replies that have been received.

The problem arises only when the wife of a man overseas (1) can prove that her husband could not be the father of her child and (2) wants to give the child in adoption without letting her husband know of its existence. If the wife is willing to confide in the husband and get his consent, the adoption can be handled like any other adoption.

### The Social Problems Involved

Much can be said against taking such action without the knowledge of the husband. But there are other factors which may make that the most desirable solution in certain cases. If the child is clearly unwanted adoption is often the best solution for him. If this is to be the final answer he should not be deprived of the foster home beyond the age of 4 to 6 months, the period considered by many as the most suitable for adoption, or subjected to the prolonged boarding care necessary if action is delayed until the husband's return. The strain on the mother if decision must be delayed until after the war and the emotional disturbance to the husband if he is notified of this situation while in a combat zone must also be taken into consideration. Social agencies will realize that if no satisfactory plan is worked out in such situations the alternative is likely to be independent placement or abortion.

### The Legal Problems Involved

The child of a married woman is presumed to be legitimate. The procedure for declaring it illegitimate varies with the laws of the different States and the interpretations put on the law often vary within a State. Among the opinions summarized here some are from agencies which have had no actual experi-

ence with such cases, the opinion may be that of the attorney for the agency or a judge having such jurisdiction may have been consulted; in some cases the agencies have had experience in handling this type of problem; and in some States the Attorney General has given an opinion. While the Attorney General's opinion is the best legal advice obtainable on the interpretation of the law, it is binding, if at all, only on the State departments and not on private agencies or individuals. Only a court decision can determine the law in any particular State and a decision in one State is not binding in another.

In those States which refuse to accept the relinquishment and consent of the mother alone, this is based on legal provisions requiring the consent of both husband and wife for the adoption of any child born in lawful wedlock. In one State the phrase "in lawful wedlock" has been held to refer, not to the status of the mother, but to the relationship from which the child was produced. It was held that a child can be born out of wedlock even though the mother is lawfully married.

In one State, only the husband can initiate action to prove that a child is illegitimate. In another the ruling is that the husband must be notified and must participate in the relinquishment. In some States, the courts can declare a child born out of wedlock on evidence submitted by the mother, thereby permitting her to sign the relinquishment alone.

There were replies from 11 States indicating that the mother alone could relinquish the child, but these carried qualifying comments. In two States where the law was interpreted as permitting the mother alone to sign the relinquishment, the procedure seemed to be:

1. Evidence is introduced to show non-access by the husband over a sufficient period of time so that he could not be the father of the child in question.
2. The child is declared illegitimate and such notation is made on the court record.
3. Relinquishment is taken from the mother only and the husband is not notified. Mother's consent to adoption is accepted as in any case of a child born out of wedlock.

The attorney for a child-placing agency in one State believes that if the birth is registered as illegitimate, relinquishment of the child can be made by the mother to a social agency. She must make a statement in writing that she is the sole legal parent

(Continued on page 15)

### BOARD MEMBER COLUMN

*Members of the boards of directors of child welfare agencies are deeply concerned about how the post-war world will protect the interests of children. They know that in some areas and in some respects planning is long overdue. At the recent board meeting of the Child Welfare League of America this subject received thoughtful consideration. Miss Catherine Mackenzie reported in the October 31st issue of the NEW YORK TIMES, the following comments by the League's board members.*

#### EXPERTS PREDICT COMMUNITY COOPERATION IN POST-WAR PLANNING OF CHILDREN'S CARE

In post-war planning for children, American communities will get together as they never have done before, judging by comments from officers and members of the board of the Child Welfare League of America, Inc., attending their recent annual meeting in New York City.

Teamwork gained from wartime experience was reported from Portland, Maine, by Miss Margaret Payson, president of the Children's Service Bureau, as "one very valuable result of combining education, health and social service in day-care programs." Miss Loula Dunn, Commissioner of Public Welfare of Alabama, foresaw a headstart for peacetime in the same joint experience on the Child Care Committee of the State Defense Council.

From the State of Washington Mrs. Henry B. Owen, trustee of the Ryther Child Center, Seattle said that the ease with which the whole community could be enlisted to look out for its children and the lack of "old barriers to be broken down" was one advantage the West has had in its child-care programs. In planning them, Mrs. Owen said "A labor representative always sits in with representatives of health, welfare and education."

Comment of most of the board members on definite plans for post-war was summed up by Mrs. Owen. "We are thinking very definitely of after-the-war, but we don't know the answers."

As a coordinating and guiding federation of several hundred child-caring agencies throughout the United States and Canada, the Child Welfare League is in a position to know the needs of children and how we are meeting them. Acute shortages of trained personnel, serious shortages of foster homes, a country-wide need to bring up to standards and to strengthen all services for children were confirmed for their own communities by many board members, including

P. A. McPhillips, president of the Children's Bureau, Memphis, and Mabbett K. Reckord, general director of the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society, Chicago, who also stressed the importance of "increasing and strengthening our services for emotionally disturbed children."

Dr. Leonard Mayo, president of the League, said that the weaknesses in our provisions for children revealed by the war have existed for a long time in our social structure. "If we are going to be realistic about post-war planning for children," he said, "something must be done to strengthen the financial undergirding of the American family; economic and social problems are inextricably bound up." The first reinforcement urged by Dr. Mayo is "a high level of employment and fair wages."

"Even when this is achieved," he added, "through the joint efforts of labor, management and government, there will still be hundreds of thousands of children who exist on an unsafe economic margin. For these children there is need of something in the way of family allowances based on income and the number of children as a means of strengthening family life."

#### Miss Puschner Elected Officer of League

Miss Emma C. Puschner, Director of the Child Welfare Division of the American Legion was elected a Vice President of the Child Welfare League of America at a meeting of the League's Board of Directors October 28. The national organization of the American Legion has long been close to the League, the Child Welfare Division having been a member of the League since the Division's organization about twenty years ago. As the Director of that Division from its beginning Miss Puschner has proved a powerful advocate for the welfare of all American children. A perennial achievement is her organization of the area child welfare conferences of the American Legion at which are assembled the child welfare chairmen from each area, department and post, and from each unit of the women's auxiliary as well as the Legion itself. Thus she and her associates have brought to thousands of local leaders an awareness of child welfare needs and an understanding of the services required to relieve these needs. The Child Welfare League is fortunate to have Miss Puschner as one of its officers as it turns attention to post-war planning.



## Interpreter's Column

*The contributors to this column are invited guest writers who have had experience in interpreting various aspects of social work, and in promoting sound public relations.*

### BY WORD OF MOUTH

What many a welfare agency needs is some good old fashioned gossip. Not malicious gossip, you understand. Just some earnest, accurate, over-the-back-fence newscasting.

For the things that people talk about are important.

Ergo, the social agency or the cause that gets talked about is important.

Now getting a welfare agency or service talked about is not a matter that need be left to chance. Board members can do it. Staff members can do it. Everyone who believes in the worthwhileness of a social service enterprise should realize that ~~he~~ or she can, individually, aid that enterprise at innumerable daily opportunities by use of the most fundamental kind of publicity—word of mouth.

There was a time when newscasting had to be entirely done by mouth. Unhappily, today too many board members and staff workers of social agencies believe that because modern invention has brought us four-color printing, daily newspapers, and miraculous radio, publicity has become the exclusive responsibility of the staff public relations expert who deals with printers, editors, and radio stations.

Now this writer is one of these alleged public relations experts (the last word is used quite loosely indeed) and I wish to record very humbly that I'd throw my loveliest mailing piece out the window were I certain that our agency possessed about 50 persons on its board, committees, and staff who every single day would do a good job of talking about this agency wherever they went. For that corps of wholesome, constructive gossipers would accomplish far more than my printed circular.

Personal conversation—intelligent, interesting, accurate, wise conversation—remains today the most potent force for building up—or tearing down—an organization. And the humblest board member, the least skilled employee, the newest staff member, can talk. You may not be able to make speeches, you may quail at the thought of writing a letter, but you can talk.

Do you? Do you, Mr. President of the Children's Aid Society, discuss with your banker friend at lunch the need of a change in the state adoption law as readily as you talk about the tax law? You ought to. He is an influential person who should know what concerns and affects the social agency of which you are president.

Do you, Mrs. Chairman of the Women's Auxiliary, tell about that family which was helped so wisely and

carefully just as readily as you talk about spring fashions? You ought to. And you should do it in a manner that will leave the realization in the minds of your friends that modern social work is not a matter of charity, but of constructive service by trained workers who help our neighbors to overcome their own difficulties.

Surely, the dramatic achievements, the human stories, the smiles and the tragedies, the victories and the disappointments of modern social and welfare agencies as they perform their daily tasks, are worth talking about.

The responsibility does not rest exclusively on the board member or volunteer. (Although, remember, it is the board member who usually knows more people who count, more people of influence—the people worth talking to.) The staff member ought to do a little gossiping, too. You say it isn't polite to talk shop? No, it isn't polite for you to talk shop—any longer than the rest of the crowd does. And when you're asked about what you do, and some friend thinks that such work must be terribly depressing, you miss a mighty important chance to win better understanding for social work if you let that remark go unanswered.

Take every opportunity to say a word for the profession in which you believe. Tell the bridge club members what it means in personal satisfaction, in community improvement, in service to others, to be a social worker. Believe me, you've got a story to tell.

But never forget that's no staff meeting in which you are holding forth. The friendly chat with the folks next door, the conversation with the minister, the dinner guest, or at the meeting of the local sisterhood, is no place for the polysyllabic language of social work. Leave the School of Social Service Administration jargon back at the office. When speaking to lay people, use language understandable to the person to whom you are talking. If you do, he might be less inclined to think social workers are high hat, superior individuals. The man down the street who works on a war factory assembly line may know what a rejected shell case is, but he probably won't get you when you talk about a rejected child.

Not only can word of mouth publicity build better understanding and good will. It is an invaluable form of financial promotion. More and larger gifts to welfare causes come from the efforts of an interesting, sincere conversationalist than from any other way. And usually it is not the conversation of the professional money raiser or the publicity expert.

More often, it is the earnest chat of a personal friend that turns the trick.

Try it at lunch today!

—WARREN E. THOMPSON,  
Director of Public Information,  
Illinois Children's Home & Aid Society, Chicago

### A Foster Day Care Service

(Continued from page 4)

help, there are many who need continuing casework service. While we are neither equipped with sufficient staff to offer these services, nor do the majority of mothers expect or seek this help from us, we feel a responsibility to see that the mother is referred to a casework agency if the need is indicated. However, with the present responsibilities which must be met, it has not been possible to meet this need. We anticipate with the increase of another member on the staff who will concentrate upon homefinding that the other workers will be able to give more time to helping mothers to use the day care plan and when they wish it, to refer them for other services.

In a recent survey made of the number of children placed in the period between April, 1943, and July, 1944, it was found that forty-nine per cent of the mothers who placed their children are anticipating working after the war is over. It would seem from these figures that foster day care should have a place in community planning after the war and that while there will undoubtedly be a decrease in the number of mothers working in peacetime, plans should be made to help the mother who must work and needs to place her baby. With this in mind the challenge in the day care field to work out the problems which handicap the child in making a good adjustment to his life is tremendous.

### The Adoptive Foster Parent

(Continued from page 7)

ism, feeble-mindedness, insanity, emotional instability, criminality or other specific qualities of nationality or physical condition. Virtually this seems almost to be saying that she does not want a child, since neither one's own nor an adopted child has such a blameless escutcheon. At the same time we must never lose sight of reality factors. The applicants who belong to the professional group, whose relatives and ancestors have been outstanding members of their communities, whose nieces and nephews are lifted beyond the average child, are not being either unreasonable or neurotic in requesting a child whose intelligence is in the superior group and whose background does not read like a story of William Faulkner's. Even if they assure the worker as they occasionally do that they would be quite contented with a potential truck driver, the chances of happiness of the latter in such a family would be very slight.

### Preferences Regarding Sex

Where a decided preference is shown for one sex it is worthwhile to elucidate what this means to the applicant. The blond blue-eyed cherub is described with amazing frequency. This could be the dream daughter the mother has always cherished, whom she can dress up, exhibit to her friends, who will always be loving and responsive, conforming, and who would have no more opportunity to grow up into a real adult than Little Orphan Annie. The wish for a daughter on the woman's part might be motivated basically by a desire to duplicate with the next generation a deeply satisfying dependency relationship with her own mother. The request for a boy generally comes from the husband, this being quite consistent with the traditional cultural role of the male in our civilization. In spite of the closeness of the father-daughter relationship, there is something primitively satisfying to a man to be able to say "this is my son" even when adoption takes the place of biological continuity. When an absolute refusal to consider a child of the sex opposite to that specified is made, it would be quite important before placement to discuss pretty thoroughly the reason for that ultimatum, since it would light up the client's attitude toward his own masculinity or femininity and his feelings of adequacy or inadequacy in these areas.

### Fear of "Bad Habits"

A commonly expressed fear of applicants is that of bad habits which will have to be "trained out" of a child when he goes into their home. For this reason they often request a baby as young as the agency permits, not merely because they want as complete as possible an experience of parenthood, usually motherhood, but also because they wish the child to conform in all important respects to their social cultural pattern. The younger the child, the easier it is for them to attain this goal, and the greater the sense of belonging there is for both. It is true that frequent replacements in foster homes set up undesirable habits and distortions of personality that even the wisest of adoptive parents may not be able to eradicate. But the baby who has spent his first six months with an affectionate and reasonably capable foster mother is not headed very far down the path of misbehavior, even though he will show some reactions to being given new parents. If applicants seem unduly apprehensive about bad habits they think may have been already established, one might suspect something amiss in their own conceptions of babyhood, its rights, privileges and pleasures. A su-



persensitive attitude toward a baby's bad habits on the part of an applicant may correlate with an overemphasis on order and cleanliness, a drive for early toilet training, a fear of masturbation, and the whole symptom picture that represents deep anxiety in the face of demands for instinctual gratification. This is not to say that *ipso facto* all people with obsessional or compulsive traits should be excluded from adoption waiting lists. Rather in our foster home studies we must think *diagnostically* and evaluate to what degree such neurotic traits, when found, are capable of modification. The probationary period can then be a time for case work help so that the new mother can modify her need for too great conformity, and both she and her child enjoy an experience that would otherwise be characterized by irritation, frustration and fear.

#### Personal History Indicative of Capacity for Parenthood

The orientation of the adoptive home study is in the present but with implied commitments for the future. Because it is of necessity a "short term" contact there is no time for a leisurely exploration of psychological history from the prenatal to the present. But this restriction does not give the worker the right to ignore the major stresses and strains or the particular satisfactions and values individuals have experienced in the process of growing up with their own families, and which they in turn may either react from or seek to repeat with the new family which they hope to create. We must not try to extract history as such from slightly reluctant clients, but rather we must try to see patterns of responses already established that will be clues in their new role as parents.

#### Homes with Fathers in Service

The impact of world conflict superimposes new problems on staff and clients that can only be touched upon briefly in a paper of this sort. The dilemma of to place or not to place when the husband has gone or is about to go into service faces all of us now. On the affirmative is the conviction that we should parallel the normal community set-up in which families are being increasingly disrupted by war. On the negative is the inescapable fact that adoption is without exception an artificial institution. Because we have had no opportunity to judge the long time effect of such family dislocations on children, we can only argue from analogy of England's experiences and from our theoretical knowledge of psychological development. Before a perma-

nent plan has been made for the adoptable child he has suffered the loss of his own mother and generally at least of one or more foster mothers. These experiences must cut deeply into his psychic structure. Then to place him deliberately in an adoptive home where for some time he will know only one parent is to put obstacles in the way of a normal childhood and perhaps adolescence. Most agencies feel that only in exceptional instances should the single person adopt. While the situation of the broken family is not identical some of the same reasoning applies. As long as we still have a back log of intact families to draw from, including the 4F's and the over 38, and as long as they meet our requirements in other respects, the child's best welfare would seem to me to lie with them.

If at the time of application the husband is already in service, and stationed in another part of the country or abroad so that he is unable to participate in the home study or the selection of a child, it would certainly be a gamble to accept such an application no matter how glowing the reports of him from relatives and friends. If he is about to go into the service and the agency still wishes to consider the application, here are some of the points that ought to be explored. How does the wife react to her husband's departure? She may be mature and stable enough to reorganize her life and to find substitute satisfactions that will to some extent balance her deprivations and loss. But she may be the sort who is dependent on her husband in all major decisions, who enjoys being protected and dominated, and who will then muddle through any new responsibilities. The more adequate person can meet the anxiety and depression of separation with fortitude and imagination. She certainly is the better adoption risk in that her motive is not simply a selfish one of filling in her own loneliness, or of creating in the child an unhealthy overdependence, attaching to him the emotions that really belong to her husband. If she has common sense as well as agency advice, she would supply compensating masculine influences following her husband's departure, as uncles, friends, teachers or even a good co-educational school if the child is old enough. This would mitigate to some extent the dangers of a practically matriarchal family.

#### Absence of Father in Relation to Age and Sex of Child

The age at which the agency would place a child in such a situation is important, since in early infancy and during the ages of 6-12, a father is less important to a child than at any other time. Whereas a brother

and sister might feel with equal keenness the absence of a father from their home, from what we know of the need for a father as a model, the boy's psychological development will be more seriously impeded than that of his sister. With his father away, it becomes difficult for him to adopt masculine parental standards and to develop mature self-discipline. His little sister would be exposed to the same danger of overdependence on her mother with its implications for adolescence, but not to the lack of a pattern on which she may model her femininity.

While other problems arising from the war situation add new difficulties to the ones we have always had to meet in selecting adoptive parents, our basic problem as case workers still remains that of knowing so well the personality patterns of our applicants that whether it be war or peace we can assure our adoptive children stable and happy parents.

## Discussion of Miss Rathbun's Paper

### Deviations from Normal

Miss Rathbun has very ably shown how to use tools of evaluation for distinguishing the normal from the severely neurotic. We homefinders need to remember, however, that it is not normal for applicants to be coming to an adoption agency, and it is not normal for children to have to have substitute parents. Therefore, the consideration of what is normal becomes a study in relativity. In studying all adoptive homes, we need not only more skill in making surer judgments but a broader knowledge and understanding of people who are different. Our task is to estimate how much deviation we can accept and yet assure the child's security. Some deviations having been turned to constructive use give deepened understanding and ability to accept difficulties.

The capacity for growth plays a very important role. Though adult, people do not remain static in emotional development. One way to estimate probable capacity for growth is by evaluating the applicants' reactions to his more significant life experiences. Another is evaluating his method of handling the problem which he brings to us, that is, his inability to have his own children and what he hopes to find in the child he wants to adopt.

### First Interviews

Before coming to us, applicants have usually talked and thought a great deal about their plan by themselves. The manner in which they share and the amount which they can share with the agency, which they feel may be critical and which has the power to give or deny, is a measure of their ability to accept a child for what he is. The first interview is an opportunity for the social worker to establish for the client, by the way she handles the situation, his trust or lack of confidence in the agency, on which the supervisory relationship will be built after the placement is made. We should let him feel our acceptance of him as a person, without necessarily a child or being sentimental. We can even reject an applicant for a child, provided we do not reject him as a person. When we can sensitively listen not only to what the client is saying, but to what he is not saying, without making decisions, we will find ourselves getting stereopticon portraits instead of flat pictures of two dimensions. If we feel capable of handling the situation should it develop into one where rejection is necessary, then we have greater ease in interviewing.

### Evidences of Growth Potentialities

The applicant's feeling about his childlessness and his specifications for a child can show the depth of his desire for children. The

way in which he has met his disappointment can be an indication of how he may react to future hardships.

The applicant who wants no history may be denying the adoption situation. Reluctance to tell a child it is adopted might also indicate the same thing. Use of the adoption interview is another measure, for the ability to share in a relationship with the agency means some willingness to let a child keep some of his own past. Many applicants, however, who have a good agency relationship feel they cannot take an older child because they are threatened by the past memories which they think the child will cherish.

Some people escape the painful knowledge of sterility by postponing the time for doing anything about it. Others go through exhaustive treatments for overcoming it as though acting under a compulsion to get their own way, regardless of a desire for a child for the value of the child himself. The adoption interview, as the next step, may be approached in the same manner of getting what they want when they want it. However, the applicant who comes to the adoption agency after having given a reasonable amount of time and effort to this problem, and who can accept agency limitations without too much resistance shows growth in having faced his difficulty, accepted it for what it is, and being ready to move in a forward direction.

Reasons for childlessness are hard to evaluate and many apparently true physical causes have turned out to be psychological after all. The willingness to follow every medical recommendation may still leave the applicant childless unless some change occurs in his emotional makeup. May there be some danger of putting too much emphasis on the overcoming of sterility, especially for those unsophisticated families who live out of reach of the service of specialists. Our first interview usually will pick up the clues to negative feelings toward children or to general immaturity, so that we will often decide on other counts that the applicant who has had no medical advice about having a child of his own, shall be rejected by us. On the other hand most applicants for older children, usually families between 38 and 45, have had some sort of medical advice. The desire for parenthood matures late in the lives of other adoptive applicants, so that we can understand that their failure to have gone into more careful research years ago regarding childlessness is parallel with their not coming to adoption sooner. "Nature catches up with them as it were" when it is usually too late biologically to do very much about it. Our job then is to estimate how much their request for a child is really a desire for children, and whether they have the necessary flexibility, warmth and understanding. I think we should consider the applicant whose childlessness is due to psychological reasons as one of those relatively less normal individuals who may or may not have potentialities for parenthood, depending upon what constructive compensations he has made and what his capacity for growth may be. Even if a couple later has their own child is it not reasonable to believe that they would have grown sufficiently through the experience of caring for a child to be able to handle the situation of having two children from such different sources?

### Rejecting Homes

In finding homes for babies, there is a wider margin of selectivity than exists for older children, for the child with the unusual background or nationality, for the three sisters who need to stay together. When an agency feels its obligation to all placeable children without family ties who are within its territory, and when the agency believes that for almost every normal child there must be a family who can meet his needs, then the selection of foster parents takes on greater complexity. We should then have an increasing awareness that we can do harm by the wrong negative decision about adoptive applicants as well as by the wrong positive decision. Delays in consummating adoption for the child under care may deprive another child of placement planning; or may make it for him, the longer he waits, to move out of his boarding home.

In making decisions, judgments should be substantiated by other symptoms which may go together with the one on which the judgment has been based. The homefinder carries a heavy responsibility and needs support in making decisions, but should beware of searching for any magic formula.

—LYDIA T. HICKS,

*Supervisor, Child Placing and Adoption Committee,  
State Charities Aid Association, New York City*



**A Wartime Adoption Problem***(Continued from page 9)*

of the child and its natural guardian. The agency can then consent to the adoption. He recommends that affidavits be taken, and include:

1. A statement from the mother regarding:
  - a. Date on which she last saw her husband
  - b. Name of alleged father
  - c. Dates of pregnancy
2. A statement, if possible, from the alleged father admitting paternity.

This attorney points out that such statements, being nonjudicial, are not conclusive proof that the husband is not the father and recommends that this procedure be followed only when an agency has every assurance that the mother's statements are reliable.

**Birth Records**

As would be expected, the status of the child on the birth record is sometimes legitimate and sometimes illegitimate. The mother registering as a married woman will sometimes give her husband's name and sometimes not. We have very little information on the extent to which the record affects the procedure in the relinquishment of the child.

**Conclusions**

Obviously, there is need in at least some States for a clarification of the legal issues involved. Private social agencies within a State and the Children's Division of the State Department of Welfare should consult with one another and cooperate in obtaining the best legal advice.

There is no way of knowing how numerous these situations are, but when one does arise the social and emotional implications may be very difficult to handle. Each situation will have to be dealt with skillfully, on an individual basis, with full regard for the interests of all concerned.

Inasmuch as birth registration procedure does not include provision for verification of the items reported, unsubstantiated entry of illegitimacy on the birth certificate would not seem to have legal value.

*Note:* Agencies that have had experience with this type of situation are requested to send to the Children's Bureau a brief statement of their experience. We will then be able to make more information available than we now have.

**Merged Children's Services**

The Children's Aid Society of Wisconsin and the Children's Service Association of Milwaukee were merged July 1, 1944 to form the Children's Service Society of Wisconsin. Miss Margaret Winchell is Executive Director.

**READERS' FORUM****DEAR EDITOR:**

We have been having a little upswing in foster-home applications this last month. Most of the people who are coming in, though, seem in one way or another to have gotten hold of a monthly bulletin, and interestingly enough, people do not seem to apply until several weeks or months after their interest has first been caught.

At the last meeting of our policies committee we as usual discussed what to do about finding homes. Those applicants who come to us continue to be from pretty simple neighborhoods and we do have a pretty large number of children now whose own home experience has been quite sophisticated and economically privileged financially. We have some children whom we would really like to see settled now, in as high standard homes as the community affords. Our committee was wondering whether other agencies had found ways of reaching homes in the more socially privileged groups, and what kind of appeal had been used in catching the imagination and interest in families who could give children a lot in the way of intellectual stimulation.

*Information Please!—Ed.*

**New Board Members**

At the annual meeting of the Child Welfare League of America, held in June 1944, four new members were added to the League's Board of Trustees.

Mrs. Francis V. du Pont has for several years been a member of the Board of The Children's Bureau of Delaware. She is also a member of the Board of the Family Service Society in Wilmington.

Mrs. Meredith Nicholson, Jr. of Indianapolis is President of the Board of the Children's Bureau of The Indianapolis Orphan Asylum.

Mr. P. A. McPhillips has been connected with the Children's Bureau, Inc. of Memphis, Tennessee in various capacities for fifteen years, and is now President of their Board.

Mr. Ben Taub is President of the Board of the DePelchin Faith Home and Children's Bureau, Houston, Texas.

**New League Member**

ASSOCIATION FOR JEWISH CHILDREN OF PHILADELPHIA

700 Church Lane  
Philadelphia 44, Pa.

Mr. Herman P. Gumnit, Executive Director

## BOOK NOTES

YOUNG OFFENDERS: AN ENQUIRY INTO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, by A. M. Carr-Saunders, Hermann Mannheim, and E. C. Rhodes. Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1944. 165 pp. \$1.75.

This unique contribution to the field of juvenile delinquency was instigated by the British Home Office in January 1938 and performed by a Reader in Statistics, Dr. E. C. Rhodes, and a Lecturer in Criminology, Dr. Hermann Mannheim, both of the London School of Economics under the supervision of Mr. A. M. Carr-Saunders, Director of the School. It was intended that it be followed by a parallel psychological study. However, war intervened and the enquiry of necessity was left at the completion of the statistical study.

As might be expected, it is an excellent presentation of refined statistical data based on a thoughtfully prepared schedule and utilizing a carefully selected control group.

Dr. Mannheim's chapter of "Previous Investigations" covering a period of 122 years, from 1816 to 1938, is a digest of twenty of the outstanding previous studies. It is not possible to review these in this article. However, the reviewer calls attention to one or two illustrations as they do pertain to our present day problem.

"The Child and the War" by Mr. Cecil Leeson published in London, 1917 (Study No. 8—pp. 12-13) pertains to children whose fathers are in the armed services, whose mothers are working, and to the child himself working at double wages. We find in these United States of America in the year 1944 that we are faced with a similar unsolved problem.

"The Young Delinquent" by Professor Cyril Burt published in 1925 (Study No. 11—pp. 18-23) emphasizes the importance of emotional and psychological factors in the delinquents' homes over and above the physical conditions. This important conclusion is frequently overlooked in our present day treatment of the delinquent and places on him an added burden of stress and strain complicated by his experience in Court.

As has been stated, the book is a comprehensive statistical study. It consequently has its definite limitations which are recognized by the authors. On the other hand, it is interesting to note how cold figures support our present day thinking and how they do not support it. They do prove a "real" increase in juvenile delinquency. It recognizes social and economic conditions as a contributing factor. There is a strong correlation between abnormal, that is, broken homes, and juvenile delinquency especially in those homes where immorality exists. Poverty itself is not a contributing factor but bad housing, overcrowding, and marital discord are. The juvenile delinquent is a complicated subject and each presents his individual constellation of factors. The authors strongly recommend the perpetuation of similar studies, for as they say "there may be fluctuation in delinquency due to what may be regarded as a general lowering of immunity, or a general increase in virulence of all or most kinds of attack." Evacuation of children is given as an illustration of such disturbance. Your reviewer would add war.

The book is not easy to read and as its authors state "the figures are difficult to interpret." It is hoped that the parallel sociological and psychological study may be undertaken and completed in order to balance so splendid a beginning.

CHARLES L. BURT,

General Agent and Secretary, Rhode Island Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Providence, R. I.

ABOUT FOSTER CHILDREN. New York City Committee on Mental Hygiene, 105 East 22nd Street, New York 10. Price 25 cents. TO FOSTER PARENTS. Price 10 cents.

Two unpretentious little pamphlets have recently been issued by the New York City Committee on Mental Hygiene and the Bureau of Child Hygiene of the New York City Department of Health, which succeed better than most in translating into simple everyday language some of our fundamental concepts concerning the problems and needs of foster children.

Pamphlet one, entitled "About Foster Children," contains suggestions to nurses and social workers for helping foster parents in this complicated undertaking. Much as we would all prefer staffs too well equipped to need a primer of this sort, many case workers in this country, harassed by heavy case loads and their own inexperience, would, I believe, find these suggestions helpful, practical and easily acceptable.

Pamphlet two, "To Foster Parents," is a condensation and simplification of pamphlet one. It could well be used to supplement the indispensable individual interpretation keyed to each foster mother's particular need.

These carefully selected and written statements should enjoy wide circulation.

MERLE E. MACMAHON,

Executive Secretary, Children's Bureau of Dayton (Ohio)

PLANNING YOUR MEETING, by Ruth Haller. National Publicity Council, 130 East 22nd Street, New York 10. 50 cents.

From the National Publicity Council's vast information files comes this timely digest of the different ways welfare and health agencies have arranged successful meetings.

It provides experienced advice at every stage of the management job, whether the meeting is to be a small gathering for an agency's intimates or a large "famous-speaker" dinner for the public. How to shape a program, how to select your speakers, how to manage the housekeeping details of meeting room and equipment—all are covered. Also, the book includes up-to-the-minute information on how to obtain servicemen as speakers and how to book radio and screen stars through the various wartime actors' committees. And it gives such homely details as how to cope successfully with meetings that include the showing of motion pictures, or that include radio broadcasts.

PLANNING YOUR MEETING provides many an idea for meeting programs themselves, features that have been tried out and found to work.